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Security Council

Sixty-sixth year

Provisional

6508th meeting

Wednesday, 30 March 2011, 5 p.m.

New York

President:	Mr. Li Baodong	(China)
Members:	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Mr. Vukašinović
	Brazil	Mrs. Viotti
	Colombia	Mr. Osorio
	France	Mr. Araud
	Gabon	Mr. Messone
	Germany	Mr. Berger
	India	Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri
	Lebanon	Mr. Assaf
	Nigeria	Mrs. Ogwu
	Portugal	Mr. Moraes Cabral
	Russian Federation	Mr. Churkin
	South Africa	Mr. Sangqu
	United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland	Mr. Parham
	United States of America	Ms. Rice

Agenda

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

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The meeting was called to order at 5.10 p.m.

Adoption of the agenda

The agenda was adopted.

The situation in Côte d'Ivoire

The President *(spoke in Chinese):* Under rule 37 of the Council's provisional rules of procedure, I should like to invite the representative of Côte d'Ivoire to participate in this meeting.

The Security Council will now begin its consideration of the item on its agenda.

Members of the Council have before them document S/2011/202, which contains the text of a draft resolution submitted by France and Nigeria.

I wish to draw the attention of Council members to document S/2011/182, which contains a letter dated 24 March 2011 from the Permanent Representative of Nigeria addressed to the President of the Security Council.

It is my understanding that the Council is ready to proceed to the vote on the draft resolution before it.

I shall now put the draft resolution to the vote.

A vote was taken by show of hands.

In favour:

Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, China, Colombia, France, Gabon, Germany, India, Lebanon, Nigeria, Portugal, Russian Federation, South Africa, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America

The President *(spoke in Chinese):* The draft resolution received 15 votes in favour. The draft resolution has been adopted unanimously as resolution 1975 (2011).

I shall now give the floor to those members of the Council who wish to make statements following the voting.

Mrs. Ogwu (Nigeria): When the thirty-ninth Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) Ordinary Summit of the Authority of Heads of State and Government called upon the Security Council to revisit the situation in Côte d'Ivoire, it did so in response to the rapidly deteriorating political security and humanitarian situation in that country.

The reports that we have received from numerous sources, including those from the Office of the Coordinator for Humanitarian Affairs, indicate that the unthinkable is taking place before our very eyes. The fragile peace established by the Ouagadougou accord a mere four years ago is quickly unravelling through patterns of killing, rape and the destruction of property. Angry militias and young people are being indoctrinated, trained, armed and deployed to seek out and harm civilian targets, increasingly through the use of heavy weaponry and explosives.

Those hardest hit are the most vulnerable — women and children who have committed no greater crime than trying to lead a normal life. Not only are civilians suffering from indiscriminate attacks, there is mounting evidence that they are also being specifically targeted. Such heinous acts violate international humanitarian law. The fact that the violence is beginning to take on ethnic and sectarian overtones is an indication of the risk of a relapse into the recent state of civil war in Côte d'Ivoire.

As stakeholders in the future of Côte d'Ivoire, the United Nations, ECOWAS and the African Union have a moral and legal obligation. Therefore, we cannot be a party to this inexorable degeneration. The inevitable consequence of such a relapse would imperil the West African subregion. This is already happening, as civilians have begun to seek refuge in Liberia, Ghana and other neighbouring countries. The added strain on those societies should not be underestimated, and the risk of conflict spillover is all too real.

Further, there is evidence of attacks on foreign nationals, including targeted attacks on those from ECOWAS States. Let there be no doubt that this situation is a collective global responsibility. We must act now.

The current situation is without a doubt a direct consequence of the refusal of Mr. Laurent Gbagbo to cede power to President Alassane Ouattara. This is unacceptable. Mr. Gbagbo's intransigence threatens to plunge his country, once the beacon of the subregion, into a bloody and protracted civil war. It is indeed time to translate the words of the Security Council's press statements of 10 January, 3 March and 11 March 2011 into concrete action.

In response to the rapidly developing circumstances, this resolution reinforces those sanctions already in place, as part of an incremental approach, to which we have all agreed, to resolving the conflict. Nigeria is confident that the resolution strengthens the mandate of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) to protect Ivorians and provides the necessary space for UNOCI and other international actors to work without hindrance.

The targeted measures against Mr. Gbagbo and his close associates will complement and strengthen the international actions that have curtailed his access to Côte d'Ivoire's accounts and resources. Moreover, our support for the political efforts of the African Union and other interlocutors has already been expressed in the Council. These preventive diplomacy strategies can create space for a peaceful transition of power.

The collective action that we have taken today by adopting this resolution is a significant step towards protecting the defenceless civilians, including women and children, in Côte d'Ivoire, who bear the brunt of the brutal attacks.

The political stalemate in Côte d'Ivoire has led to an absence of effective governance, and, indeed, the unrest is spiralling out of control. This resolution provides an opportunity to stem the tide of conflict in Côte d'Ivoire. In this defining moment for Côte d'Ivoire, it is imperative that we all ensure that the valid aspirations of the Ivorian people are ultimately fulfilled.

Mr. Hardeep Singh Puri (India): India is seriously concerned at the situation that has prevailed in Côte d'Ivoire since the presidential elections last year. We have consistently held that both parties in Côte d'Ivoire should exercise maximum restraint and respect the outcome of the elections. We have urged the parties to ensure that there is no violence, because it harms the well-being of the Ivorian people and distracts from the main task of economic development, social cohesion and national reconciliation.

During the last three months, we have supported all efforts to resolve the current problem peacefully and through dialogue. To that end, we have supported the efforts of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union to find a political solution leading to the restoration of democracy and the will of the Ivorian people at the earliest. With that objective in mind, we voted in favour of the resolution adopted today.

We want to put on record that United Nations peacekeepers should draw their mandate from the relevant resolutions of the Security Council. They cannot be made instruments of regime change. Accordingly, the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) should not become a party to the Ivorian political stalemate. UNOCI should also not get involved in a civil war, but carry out its mandate with impartiality and while ensuring the safety and security of peacekeepers and civilians. In this context, we have noted that a UNOCI helicopter was fired upon by the Forces républicaines de Côte d'Ivoire yesterday, 29 March. We call on all parties to respect UNOCI's military impartiality.

The Council has heard various allegations of serious crimes committed against civilians in Côte d'Ivoire. There should be no a priori presumption about the nature of these alleged crimes. Each allegation has to be investigated on a case-by-case basis by the competent national bodies, and further action taken pursuant to relevant laws.

We also want to place on record our growing concern at the tendency to hurry the process of adopting resolutions. We think that there should be enough time for deliberations and consultations with all countries concerned. In situations such as those envisaged in the present resolution, it is imperative that troop-contributing countries be first consulted on the mandate of United Nations peacekeepers. Such consultations are necessary not only to making well-considered decisions, but also to the effective implementation of the mandate.

We want to reiterate that India is not a member of the International Criminal Court (ICC). Of the 192 Members of the United Nations, only 114 are members of the ICC. Five of the 15 members of the Security Council, including three permanent members, are not parties to the Rome Statute. It is also important to note that there are clear legal provisions concerning States parties to the Rome Statute. There are also guidelines for States that are not parties to the Rome Statute to accept the exercise of jurisdiction by the ICC. These provisions and guidelines should be followed without exception. It merits underlining that there is no mandate in resolution 1975 (2011) for the Security

Council to refer the situation in Côte d'Ivoire to the ICC.

Mr. Sangqu (South Africa): South Africa remains deeply concerned about the deteriorating situation in Côte d'Ivoire, a sisterly country that has always been a beacon of stability and prosperity in West Africa and Africa as a whole. South Africa believes that the African Union (AU), the Economic Community of West African States and the United Nations must persist in their quest to find a peaceful political solution to the current crisis in Côte d'Ivoire, which is now rapidly slipping into civil war. A political solution aimed at restoring national reconciliation and unity, democracy and good governance is the only sustainable approach to ensuring long-term stability in Côte d'Ivoire.

In that regard, the African Union Peace and Security Council, in its summit meeting of 10 March, endorsed the recommendations of its High-level Panel on an overall political solution to the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire. The AU reaffirmed its recognition of the election of Mr. Alassane Ouattara as the President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire. South Africa wishes to encourage the Chairperson of the AU Commission to continue in his efforts to appoint a high representative whose mandate would be to implement an overall political solution and to complete the process for a way out of the crisis.

The indiscriminate violence throughout the country continues to cause untold human suffering, with serious regional consequences. The continued senseless killing of civilians, threats and acts of intimidation, as well as the rising number of refugees, are serious violations of the human rights of civilians. We call on all parties to put an end to these violations and to avoid a further escalation of hostilities.

South Africa voted in favour of resolution 1975 (2011), as it is fully in line with the road map outlined by the African Union, which calls for an end to hostilities, for the protection of civilians, and for the parties to implement the political road map outlined by the High-level Panel. Additionally, the resolution strengthens the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire by allowing it, while impartially implementing its mandate, to protect civilians under imminent threat of physical violence, within its capabilities and its area of deployment.

We urge the parties to comply with the terms of the resolution just adopted and, through their actions, to work towards a sustainable political solution that takes into account the will of all Ivorians. Continued violence exacerbates instability in Côte d'Ivoire and the West African region as a whole.

Mrs. Viotti (Brazil): Brazil is following with great concern the deterioration of the situation in Côte d'Ivoire. The escalation of violence throughout the country and the increase in human rights violations are unacceptable results of a protracted dispute. We support the sending of a clear message from the Security Council that all violence should immediately stop.

Brazil strongly condemns all violence against civilians, regardless of its origin. We urge all Ivorians to exercise restraint. The authority of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) must be respected by all parties. Its personnel should be able to fulfil UNOCI's mandate free of threat, attack and restriction of movement. While implementing its mandate to protect civilians, UNOCI must exercise caution and impartiality so as not to become party to the conflict.

Brazil continues to strongly support a political process that promotes a negotiated settlement to the crisis while upholding the will of the Ivorian people, as reflected in the recent elections. The efforts of the African Union and other regional actors in this regard deserve our strong support. In that sense, we are encouraged by the inclusion in resolution 1975 (2011), adopted today, of provisions to emphasize the need to pursue a political solution that preserves democracy and peace in Côte d'Ivoire and promotes lasting reconciliation among all Ivorians. More than ever, preventing Côte d'Ivoire from relapsing into conflict should be the Council's utmost priority.

Mr. Messone (Gabon) (*spoke in French*): I thank the delegations of France and Nigeria for having submitted resolution 1975 (2011).

Gabon has always sought a peaceful solution to the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire. I recall that, following the elections of 28 November 2010, Gabon aligned itself with the position of the international community, the United Nations, the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States recognizing Mr. Alassane Ouattara as President of Côte d'Ivoire. During the post-electoral crisis, Gabon has supported

all initiatives to promote dialogue towards achieving a lasting, peaceful solution to the crisis.

The heightened violence and attacks on the civilian population remain of great concern to us. We firmly condemn all such violence, and in particular the use of heavy weaponry against civilians. My delegation recalls that, when resolution 1962 (2010) was adopted in December 2010, Gabon expressed its readiness to endorse firmer measures, including targeted sanctions against those who threatened the peace and national reconciliation process, called the results of the presidential election into question, hindered the work of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire, and committed serious violations of human rights and international humanitarian law.

It was largely with a view to protecting the civilian population that we voted today in favour of resolution 1975 (2011). Gabon is convinced that all the measures contained in the resolution adopted by consensus by the Security Council today will help to better protect civilians and establish conditions conducive to improving the humanitarian situation, which has already created hardships for the countries of the region and threatened their stability.

Lastly, while we welcome the consensus in the Security Council, my delegation would also like to point out that the measures contained in the resolution should bring about a comprehensive political outcome that safeguards peace and democracy, drives the country's reconstruction and promotes reconciliation among all Ivorians.

Ms. Rice (United States of America): The United States welcomes the unanimous adoption of this strong resolution this afternoon. The Council has met on numerous occasions in an attempt to find a peaceful end to the ongoing crisis. We have strongly condemned the violence. We have urged former President Gbagbo to step aside so that President Ouattara, as the duly elected President of Côte d'Ivoire, can govern. We have stressed our support for the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire and its mandate to protect civilians. And we have adopted targeted sanctions against those most responsible for obstructing peace.

This resolution sends a strong signal that Mr. Gbagbo and his followers should immediately reject violence and respect the will of the Ivorian people. As violence continues, Côte d'Ivoire stands at a crossroads. Mr. Gbagbo and his supporters can continue to cling to power, which will only lead to more innocent civilians being wounded and killed and more diplomatic and economic isolation, or Mr. Gbagbo and his followers can finally reject violence and respect the will of the Ivorian people. If that path is chosen, Ivorians can reclaim their country and rebuild the vibrant economy that was once admired by all of Africa.

The United States urges the Security Council to support and work with President Ouattara in his efforts to create a peaceful and prosperous future for all Ivorians — a future based on inclusive governance, reunification and reconciliation. We urge all parties to exercise restraint and to avoid violence against civilians. Now is the time for all Ivorians to embrace the path of peace and to unite in rebuilding Côte d'Ivoire so that future generations can enjoy the stability and prosperity that all Ivorians deserve.

Mr. Berger (Germany): Germany also welcomes the unanimous adoption of this resolution, and we would like to thank France and Nigeria for their initiative.

The rapidly deteriorating security situation in Côte d'Ivoire is highly alarming. We are deeply concerned about reports of increased fighting and violence against civilians, as well as about armament and recruitment, including of mercenaries. Côte d'Ivoire is on the brink of a full-scale civil war. By adopting this resolution today, the Council has demonstrated that it is ready to act in the face of the deteriorating security situation on the ground.

With this resolution the Council sends a strong and urgent signal to Laurent Gbagbo and his entourage that the time to step aside has come, in order to prevent further violence and to enable the start of a political process that should result in peace, reconciliation and democracy in the country. Germany fully supports this resolution, which urges all parties to show the utmost restraint and to prevent a relapse into civil war.

We commend the work of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire. We encourage the peacekeeping mission to make full use of its mandate, provided by the Security Council to ensure, within its capabilities, the protection of civilians under imminent threat of physical violence. We are very concerned about increasing attacks and violence, committed not only against civilians but also against United Nations personnel. Those who commit such acts must be

brought to national and international justice, including, where applicable, to the International Criminal Court.

Today's resolution should not be seen as substituting for a political process. We strongly welcome the efforts undertaken by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and the African Union to seek a political resolution of the crisis in concert with the Security Council. We encourage the African Union and ECOWAS to redouble their efforts to find a lasting political solution.

We are deeply concerned about continued human rights violations and the dire humanitarian situation for displaced persons and refugees in Côte d'Ivoire and neighbouring States, in particular in Liberia. We look forward to the report of the independent international commission of inquiry to be appointed by the President of the Human Rights Council, as well as to reports on the humanitarian situation.

Mr. Osorio (Colombia) (*spoke in Spanish*): The increasing deterioration of the situation in Côte d'Ivoire is alarming, as is the contemptuous manner in which Mr. Gbagbo has ignored the calls by the United Nations and regional bodies in Africa. We are concerned about the ongoing violations of the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the civilian population, including women and children. That merits our unreserved condemnation — which is why we reiterate the fundamental responsibility of Côte d'Ivoire to protect all people on its territory. We hope that the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire will be able, in an atmosphere of impartiality, to contribute to protecting the civilian population and its rights.

Colombia believes that by adopting this resolution the Council is categorically reiterating its determination to hold responsible those who hinder the peace and reconciliation process and incite hatred and violence. We therefore voted in its favour. The sanctions against the individuals designated by the Council should be carried out, with the international community called upon to ensure their full and effective implementation.

My delegation would like to underscore the urgency of immediately putting an end to this violence. We are convinced of the need to find a political solution to the crisis in order to respect the will of the people of Côte d'Ivoire and promote peace and reconciliation among all Ivorians.

We reiterate that a solution to the crisis requires acknowledging the results of the November 2010 elections. My delegation rejects Mr. Gbagbo's decision to ignore the proposal for a political solution put forward by the African Union High-Level Panel. We urge him to give up power immediately.

Mr. Parham (United Kingdom): This unanimous resolution sends an important message about the firm resolve of the international community to see a swift resolution to the political crisis in Côte d'Ivoire. It responds to an urgent situation. Events are moving fast on the ground. The security situation continues to deteriorate. And the position of civilians is of increasing concern. I would like to highlight four main points in the resolution.

First, it condemns the violence in Côte d'Ivoire and calls for the implementation of a political solution.

Secondly, it explicitly calls for Mr. Gbagbo to step aside to enable such a solution and calls for all Ivorian State institutions, including the Defence and Security Forces of Côte d'Ivoire, to yield to the authority vested by the Ivorian people in President Ouattara.

Thirdly, it specifically targets Mr. Gbagbo and those close to him for financial sanctions and travel bans. Such measures are in support of the African Union's efforts to find a political solution, and respond to the calls made to the Security Council by the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) in its communiqué of 24 March. The United Kingdom supports the continued efforts of the African Union and ECOWAS to implement a peaceful transfer of power and to avoid violence.

Fourthly, the resolution also reinforces action to protect civilians. It does not alter the robust mandate of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI), under which the Operation is already authorized to use all necessary means to protect civilians, but it does reaffirm UNOCI's role in protecting civilians and preventing the use of heavy weapons against civilians. It also underlines the importance of the protection of civilians by all parties.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): I shall now make a statement in my capacity as the Permanent Representative of China.

China voted in favour of resolution 1975 (2011), which was just adopted. China is seriously concerned

at the continuing deterioration in the security situation in Côte d'Ivoire. We call on all Ivorian parties to immediately cease all violence and armed confrontations, and to seek to settle their differences through dialogue and consultations.

We believe that the crisis caused by the elections in Côte d'Ivoire must be addressed through peaceful means. We appreciate and support the efforts made by the African Union and the Economic Community of West African States to find a political settlement to the crisis. We call on all Ivorian parties to show active and comprehensive cooperation.

China's position regarding the International Criminal Court remains unchanged.

China always believes that United Nations peacekeeping operations should strictly abide by the principle of neutrality. We hope that the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire will fulfil its mandate in a strict and comprehensive manner, help to peacefully settle the crisis in Côte d'Ivoire and avoid becoming a party to the conflict.

I now resume my functions as President of the Council.

I give the floor to the representative of Côte d'Ivoire.

Mr. Bamba (Côte d'Ivoire) (*spoke in French*): The protection of the civilian population in Côte d'Ivoire, which is living under threat, compounded by a deteriorating humanitarian situation marked by massive numbers of refugees and internally displaced persons, remains a matter of the greatest concern to the President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, His Excellency Mr. Alassane Ouattara, and his Government. The international community, like the Ivorian Government, cannot remain silent and impassive. We must find the means to protect the civilian population and to deliver humanitarian relief and assistance to the victims.

The African Union and the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) have called for the strengthening of the mandate of the United Nations Operation in Côte d'Ivoire (UNOCI) and the imposition of targeted sanctions against the outgoing President — who refuses to peacefully give up power — and his entourage. Subsequently, in my most recent statement to the Security Council (see S/PV.6506), my delegation sought the adoption of robust deterrent measures to prevent the use of violence against innocent civilians and restore lasting peace and security in Côte d'Ivoire

The Security Council has just provided a strong response to our concerns by adopting resolution 1975 (2011), which encompasses a number of objectives. The first is to strengthen the mandate of UNOCI in terms of the protection of civilians. The second is to impose sanctions against Ivorian individuals who refuse to recognize the polling results and also incite hatred and violence. The third is to prevent the use of heavy weapons against the civilian population. The fourth pertains to a potential referral of the situation to international legal institutions, such as the International Criminal Court, with a view to tracking down the perpetrators of the massive human rights violations in Côte d'Ivoire. The fifth is a demand for the departure of Mr. Gbagbo. Finally, the sixth is the effective installation of the legitimate President of the Republic of Côte d'Ivoire, Alassane Ouattara, in full exercise of his functions.

In that regard, my Government would like to pay tribute to the Security Council for its sense of responsibility. Indeed, in taking such measures, which first and foremost strengthen the operational capacity of UNOCI, the Council has demonstrated its sensitivity to the distress calls of the civilian population living in Côte d'Ivoire and currently under threat.

My Government recognizes and once again wishes to pay tribute to the outstanding work of UNOCI. We reaffirm that we intend to spare no effort to ensure that UNOCI fulfils its mandate under the best possible conditions. Furthermore, my delegation reaffirms the consent of the legitimate Government of Côte d'Ivoire to authorize the presence of UNOCI in Ivorian territory. That is why my Government condemns any attack, regardless of its nature, against UNOCI. We also wish to provide assurances that concrete measures will be taken to bring to justice any individual — Ivorian or not — found guilty of attacking not only UNOCI and its personnel, but also any individual residing in the territory of Côte d'Ivoire.

In that connection, my delegation would like to say here that the Forces républicaines de Côte d'Ivoire were not in any way involved in the shots fired at a UNOCI helicopter.

Incidents of post-election violence, which had claimed 860 lives as of 23 March according to the figures provided by the medical and social unit of the Rally of Houphouëtistes for Democracy and Peace, have disfigured our beautiful country. Today, it is imperative to stop the cycle of violence in Côte d'Ivoire and declare an end to impunity. Ivorians wish to re-establish peace and respect for human life. The very painful sacrifices by our brave civilian population during this post-electoral crisis are but a reflection of their deep yearning for the emergence of democracy, the exercise of their fundamental rights and respect for human rights in Ivorian society. That is our priority. In the same vein, during his address to the nation on 15 March, President Alassane Ouattara appealed to all Ivorians for reconciliation and the reconstruction of Côte d'Ivoire in peace and with dialogue, love and fraternity.

While awaiting the establishment of a Government of national unity, whose most important tasks will be national reconciliation and the reform of the defence sector, the Government of Côte d'Ivoire has just set up a presidential emergency programme funded by $97 million. The programme's goal is to meet, as rapidly as possible, the most pressing needs of the population stemming from the post-electoral crisis. The programme is focused on the distribution of drinking water, education, electricity and combating unhealthy living conditions.

As a fervent disciple of the late former President Félix Houphouët Boigny, President Alassane Ouattara is a man of peace and dialogue. He wishes to unite all of Côte d'Ivoire's daughters and sons so that they can live together, and together rebuild their country. My delegation would therefore like to reaffirm here the desire of President Ouattara to cooperate fully and with goodwill with the United Nations, the African Union and ECOWAS in the framework of any process of constructive dialogue aimed at restoring lasting peace and security in Côte d'Ivoire.

The President (*spoke in Chinese*): There are no further speakers inscribed on my list. The Security Council has thus concluded the present stage of its consideration of the item on its agenda.

The meeting rose at 5.50 p.m.